

**Oral History Interview with
Alma McPhee**

Cal Poly Pomona University Library

Alma McPhee Summary

Alma Catherine Doyle McPhee was married to Julian McPhee, who served as president of the California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo from 1933 to 1966 and of California State Polytechnic University, Pomona from 1938 to 1966.

Julian was born in 1896 in San Francisco, California. He studied agriculture at University of California, Berkeley and graduated with a bachelor's degree in 1917. Alma was also born in the San Francisco Bay Area, although one year earlier. Alma first met Julian in 1914 and they courted through his college years and first job as a teacher in Placerville. They would go on to have six daughters.

Julian joined the Navy during World War I and was commissioned as an officer by the time he and Alma married in 1918. After the war, Julian worked as a farm advisor in Merced, then as a teacher in Gilroy. By 1926, he was head of the California state Bureau of Agricultural Education and would travel up and down the state promoting programs at high schools. Alma and their growing family moved with him as he took on each new challenge.

In 1933, McPhee became president of the California State Polytechnic College, as the San Luis Obispo campus was known at the time. Five years later, Cal Poly acquired the campus of the Voorhis School for Boys in San Dimas. The School had been established by automotive executive Charles B. Voorhis in 1928. Charles' son, Jerry Voorhis, served as headmaster until 1936, when he was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives. By 1938, the elder Voorhis decided to close the school and donated the campus to Cal Poly.

Julian McPhee oversaw the transfer of the gift and reopened the site as the Voorhis Campus of the California State Polytechnic College in September 1938. The campus closed during World War II and reopened in 1948. In 1949, Cal Poly acquired the W.K. Kellogg Arabian Horse Ranch in nearby Pomona. The Ranch site, at the time referred to as the Kellogg Campus, was much larger than the Voorhis Campus and instruction began to move to the new location. The move was complete by 1956 and the Voorhis Campus was used for student housing. The southern location was referred to as the Kellogg-Voorhis Campus during this period.

McPhee reached the compulsory retirement age of 70 in February 1966. In advance of his departure, he authored a bill to officially separate the San Luis Obispo and Kellogg-Voorhis campuses, a move that had long been lobbied for by the Kellogg-Voorhis faculty and students. The newly independent institution renamed itself Cal Poly Pomona. McPhee unfortunately did not live long after he retired and died on November 10, 1967.

Cal Poly Pomona retained the Voorhis Campus for several more years as a conference center and then leased it to the Pacific Coast Baptist Bible College in 1972. Once the lease term was up, the land was sold to developers. Today it is the site of the Buddhist charitable organization the Tzu Chi Foundation.

Subject Headings

California Polytechnic State University, San Luis Obispo

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McPhee, Alma

McPhee, Julian A.

Voorhis Campus

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Alma McPhee

July 12, 1972

*Interview Conducted by Ken Kitch
Transcribed by Caryn Romo*

START OF TAPE 1 of 5 TAPES

KK: [We are in the] room of Alma McPhee, Mrs. Julian A. McPhee, who through all the years has been right hand of the guiding power of Cal Poly. Her window overlooks the valley of San Luis Obispo and I'm sure that she can't look out this window without having many, many memories occur of the years in which she spent as the aide of President McPhee. I've asked her to simply tell us in her own words and with her own thoughts, her experiences with Voorhis; her first knowledge of Voorhis, her memory of how the college and President McPhee happened to obtain it for the state, the uses that she sought, the good things, the bad things, the happy things and the sad things that are bound to occur in the history of any institution like this so long as that institution is living. So, I'm going to turn the microphone over to Mrs. McPhee and ask her just to tell us in her own words, the story that I have outlined here before, Mrs. McPhee.

AM: Well, I'll try to recollect, it's many years ago, I believe it was in the Spring of [19]'38 that Landon's son who was a student here in San Luis Obispo, came to Mr. McPhee and asked if he would be interested in having a branch college in San Dimas. His first thought was that Landon made the statement in rather a light vein and answered to that serious thought, oh why sure. Then after that, things began to happen, quite rapidly. Then he received a call from Charles B. Voorhis, asking for an appointment, but rather than have Mr. Voorhis make the trip up here, he offered to make the trip to San Dimas. Of course, the first thoughts, (many of you have been there) when we arrived there, it was, the structure was a very beautiful, country club, and still envied the people that were down there in the beginning, that he sent down from San Luis Obispo here to start the college. He thought there was such an opportunity for the students, living and working in that type of an environment, I remember those things. He also had to see that it was more than a country club program that was carried out. So, after the first interview with the Voorhis family, he asked for a few weeks to investigate the work of the college. Mr. Voorhis asked for a week or so to investigate the work, of the college, so much had been going on at San Luis Obispo, and other matters. After Mr. Voorhis was satisfied with the work at the college, and Mr. McPhee went down and made his second visit; I believe at that time he took Dr. Walter Dexter with him to look it over and get the instructions of how he would have to; the legal aspects of the transgressions had to be worked out.

KK: Now Dr. Dexter was the State Superintendent of Public Instruction, yea, yes.

AM: Then State Superintendent of Public Instruction at that time, yes. I wonder if you've ever heard the story about how he was able to accept the gift when he—

KK: No.

AM: Did you ever? There was an interesting story concerning his official capacity and accepting gifts, for the state. He said that prior to the Voorhis transaction, an interested patron of Cal Poly offered him a fine group of full-bred hogs for use on the campus, and he was told, that he had no official right to accept gifts for the state. [laughter] So he saw that a special bill was passed by the legislature, so that he could have those hogs for his college Husbandry department, and the same act committed him the acceptance of the Voorhis Unit.

KK: [laughter]

AM: [laughter] I believe it was around the first part of September, in [19] '38, the deed was filed. I remember within that week, there were five, a few, maybe I should say a few teachers and 150 students started school activities on the Voorhis Campus of the California Polytechnic College.

KK: Within five weeks?

AM: Within a few weeks!

KK: Within a few weeks, yes, alright, you emphasized that.

AM: Yes.

KK: That probably is the fastest establishment of a college that our country has ever seen wouldn't you think?

AM: I think so [laughter] because this was first started in the Spring and then [unintelligible] by September the first.

KK: That's an interesting part of history.

AM: So then, after that there were oh, many things that had to be straightened out through the state Department of Education. Then Mr. McPhee would have different meetings he brought the state board, which the colleges were under, the State Board of Education, in those years.

KK: Now that's each of the state colleges went directly to the state and superintendent wasn't it?

AM: Yes, and the State Board of Education met together, and the college presidents were present at that meeting and put forth whatever things they were looking for and whatever things to be settled in the college, just like they do now. Just like they did, first it was Mr. Gallagher that came in.

KK: From New York?

AM: Yes, from New York and that was when the trustees were formed. That was during, I guess that was through, I can't recall, was that [Governor Pat] Brown's administration?

KK: Yes, it was, I think, in fact I'm pretty sure it was.

AM: I'm pretty sure it was Brown's administration. And of course, he carried it on very similar to Cal Poly here at San Luis Obispo. We would journey down there every oh maybe sometimes every ten days and sometimes it would be a little more often, just depending.

KK: Now wait just a minute, I'm thinking back there, now you're talking about the acquisition of Voorhis into who's term?

AM: Yes.

KK: It must have been [Governor Earl] Warren's term, don't you think?

AM: That's what I think too, in [19]'38.

KK: That would be Earl Warren, yea. In fact, I think I can remember Earl Warren coming down in a bus and making a speech here at Cal Poly while he was campaigning for his term of office.

AM: Governorship.

KK: Yes, or I think it was his second term.

AM: Yes, I think it must have been too. Must have been '38 because I can't remember if Brown was in for two terms or if he'd been out.

KK: For a couple—

AM: Four years now. It must have been during Warren's term.

KK: I think it must have been.

AM: Yes, ah-huh.

KK: Whoever it was, ought to take a great deal of credit for it.

AM: Yes, I think so too. I think Dr. Dexter, as I said, was here when he first acquired then of course Dr. Simpson was in, and he was also very interested in it.

KK: I don't remember Dexter; was he as close to Mr. McPhee as Mr. Simpson was?

AM: Yes, I think so, but he only lived a few years, yes, they were very close. You know they named this library out here.

KK: That's right, the Walter Dexter library.

AM: The Walter Dexter Library. He was very much in favor of anything that Mr. McPhee was interested in and always helped him out in acquiring and getting many things in the state legislature.

KK: It seemed to me that one gift that your husband had was his ability to always have people in key positions who believed in him.

AM: Yes, I think he did, very definitely so because, well, I think because he was very honest about everything he did and when he talked to them, he told them exactly what his plans were.

Well, they seemed to believe in him and as a result he seemed to be able to get what he went after.

KK: Well, they knew he needed, what he said he needed.

AM: Yes.

KK: I know that from the way he used to cut our budgets and such.

AM: Yes, that's it.

KK: Who's the first administrator that you remember down there?

AM: Weir Fedders.

KK: Weir Fedders.

AM: Yes.

KK: Okay, and where did he get Weir?

AM: From here.

KK: From here!

AM: He'd been here, and they went down—

KK: Was he the fella that was teaching meat animals or something? No, he was teaching inspection, wasn't he?

AM: No, I think, yes, because he went into that, he left Poly to go into that seed business.

KK: Oh yes.

AM: That fertilizer company. I think it was up there around Stockton somewhere.

KK: "Best—Best Fertilizer" I think it was.

AM: That could have been, yes, could have been. [Unintelligible] Ghrilander, one of the girls from the office to help with the secretarial work.

KK: How do you spell her name, that's the first time I've heard her name?

AM: Her name is now Arnold, Mrs. Arnold. G-H-R-I-L-A-N-D-E-R. Ghrilander.

KK: That will give me a tip to do some further looking. She was the first secretary down there?

AM: The first secretary that went down there.

KK: She was Weir Fedder's secretary?

AM: Yea, the reason why I'm telling you is I remember them.

KK: That's what I want.

AM: Yes, she was. Of course, then, you know Mr. Meachum was down there.

KK: Vern Meachum?

AM: And his family. And then Harold Wilson was down there too you know.

KK: Harold Wilson followed Meachum?

AM: Yes.

KK: Pardon me, do you mind me interrupting you with these questions?

AM: No, no, I'd rather you would so it will jog my memory if it's possible. [laughter]

KK: [laughter] Ok, now where did Howard Hawkins fit in here? He was next?

AM: He was there, and he when things were, you know during the war time.

KK: Yes.

AM: Well Howard was there and in charge during that time.

KK: During that time, the school was not in operation during the war.

AM: Not in operation during the war time, yes. I don't think they had any students left there. I also remember when we first went down there, that some of those housemothers were still living there. In those cottages there.

KK: Yes.

AM: That had been there while Mr. [Jerry] Voorhis was there, but they only stayed a short while. They found I guess that it wasn't necessary for college boys to have a [laughter], they certainly would find it now.

KK: [laughter]

AM: Then there is always the calls and the trips to Sacramento.

KK: Oh yes, I can remember that.

AM: Some bill was coming up, they were going to you know, try to do some things. The University of California I think was the biggest thorn in his side for many years.

KK: Of course, they felt he was a traitor.

AM: Yes, I know.

[laughter]

KK: Then he picked some of his key people from the university.

AM: Yes, from the university later.

KK: But I think eventually that was pretty well wiped out, wasn't it?

AM: Oh yes, very definitely. Yes, as the years went on, I think in the case of, if you can't beat them, join them or something like that. It probably is mostly because of the competition with Davis that probably brought on this enmity or whatever you may call it. They were really the only Ag school I believe, around in California at that time. That was principally why he wanted a place like Poly out here because he never could get the university to do the things that he wanted to. That's why he wanted a place for the Future Farmers and the Ag teachers. That's why he was so interested in when Chris Jespersen got in, interested in here.

KK: Chris was the one who originally got him interested in this school here?

AM: In the school, oh yes uh-huh. When Chris was up in the legislature at that time see, they were all for closing it you see because they had, what was it, 100 students or something?

KK: Something like that.

AM: And quite a size faculty and a—

KK: Wasn't it sort of a military school there?

AM: Uh-huh, and one time, they had girls there, they let all the girls out you see. And, it was more or less, a glorified high school. So, they were going to close it because they had a big budget of \$375,000. So, I guess Chris got him interested and then he said he'd be willing to—it was during the Depression—take it over for seventy-five thousand. [laughter] Talked to some of the fellows, and that he paid Howie O'Daniels \$75 a month.

KK: He did? I never knew that.

AM: Yea, didn't you know that? I remember that [laughter] to start out as an athletic coach.

KK: As a cadet teacher.

AM: Athletic coach. He'd been working over here at the Mission, Howie O'Daniel, I guess probably just out of college out of Santa Clara.

KK: Ah huh.

AM: And came down here and got this job at the Mission.

KK: Well, how did he make a living at \$75 a month?

AM: Before he was married, I guess, I don't know but I remembered that [laughter].

KK: I've been hearing from time to time, about people who offered Mr. McPhee properties? One of them that I recall was Santa Barbara. What was it, Teachers College?

AM: Teachers College, yes, uh huh, they had offered him that, and this Hancock from Santa Maria.

KK: I know who he is, who he was.

AM: They had this great big dairy down there. They had offered him that you know.

KK: I never heard that.

AM: Yes, uh huh. He had offered him that.

KK: What are some of the other, any of the other, I heard of one.

AM: A few times I remember them saying; we went up one time I can remember that, to look over the farm at Napa.

KK: Oh, Napa State Hospital?

AM: Yes. he didn't think it was going to work out at all. [laughter] I'd say well I think you probably got just as much as you can do with. You know I think now, Mr. [Robert E.] Kennedy had a real, a simple job in some respects. He doesn't have to go running down to Voorhis, or back up to the state for legislation for this and that.

KK: And he doesn't have to worry about enrollment.

AM: No, no and things like that. That was always, I can remember, when it was getting time for school or registration. Jul used to worry about that, praying that he would get enough students you know, to carry on for those first few years. And things were just going along beautifully when the war came along and then down to the bedrock again. But then, he brought in the Navy, the cadets, the Navy cadets here. And then of course so many of the boys that had been there that came out of the war and then came back to school again, got things rolling and they've been going on ever since, rolling ever since.

KK: You know, I can recall two or three sons of men who were out here during the world war, older men at that time.

AM: Uh huh.

KK: And these were younger sons evidently. But they came out here because of the stories that they heard from their fathers or maybe it was their older brothers or something like that.

AM: Yes.

KK: I guess that would be more like it. [unintelligible] I heard of one rather complicated switch and I wonder if you heard of that. That is that Whittier College or Whittier Boys School,

AM: Oh, you mean the state school?

KK: Yes, we'd go to Tehachapi.

AM: Yes.

KK: Then Tehachapi would come to Cal Poly.

AM: [unintelligible] There was a woman that was a matron. That was a women's institution at that time. Oh, that was many years ago. I remember we went there because they wanted to make some kind of a trade. They would come out to Whittier, oh it was complicated, but he just didn't

see any future in that you know. That would have been out of existence for sure that Tehachapi place.

KK: I'm sure, for no other reason than the earthquake they had up there.

AM: Yes, after that, yes indeed.

KK: How I got on to it may be interesting to you, was that I was talking to some of the San Dimas and La Verne women who had belonged to the San Dimas and La Verne Women's Club. They told about how their women's club got out and so much activity and so much action and so much pressure on the legislature to prevent the Tehachapi prison women from coming over into their community. [laughter from both]

AM: Well maybe he got a little of that too.

KK: I think that maybe he did.

AM: He may have gotten letters on that too that I do not recall right now you know.

KK: [laughter]

AM: That could be possible too yea. Did you see this man out here that's been writing in the archives out here and doing—

KK: Oh yes, Fred Gentner.

AM: Gentner, yes.

KK: Yes, we'd been working together.

AM: Oh, uh ha.

KK: He's been helping me, and I've been helping him.

AM: He was here one day.

KK: I'm going to spend some time over in the archives there with him helping me.

AM: Uh ha.

KK: And try to get it from that angle. Then Harold Wilson has been very helpful. He gave me some old files, important, talking about Voorhis agreements and things like that.

AM: Oh yes, that would be wonderful to have that.

KK: I have them in the back of the car right here. He rescued them from being thrown away. He heard they were going to be thrown away, so he said bring them up to me. That must have been done a year or so ago. So, he rescued those things.

AM: Oh good.

KK: That just shows how thoughtless people can be. That's why it's important to get these things in the archives so they won't be lost.

AM: Well, that's what Jul was doing in that year after that first operation, he was able to be up and around again, and he was still in his office, and was trying to get all of these things to leave there and I suppose that was among

KK: No, I think this came from another source.

AM: Oh.

KK: I don't think it was any of Mr. McPhee's files.

AM: Oh, oh.

KK: They have names on them, and copies checked under other names you see.

AM: Oh, I see.

KK: So, I'm pretty sure that isn't true.

AM: I know he was trying to do that to get all of that material together for them to use when they wanted it and needed it.

KK: Remember, it's not only the history of Cal Poly, but it's the history of a very important part of the state college system you see, well state university and college system. That's another reason that it ought to be saved, preserved.

AM: Yes, they should keep them in a place, but I'm sure that they will have because Mr. Getner you told me he was trying to get the furniture that they had used, that Mr. McPhee had in his office. I think he finally traced it to the Drama department.

KK: They may have been using it as props.

AM: Yes, so whether he was going to be able to get it, he didn't know.

KK: I'll bet he can.

AM: He probably will, yea. I didn't know whether he was referring to what Mr. McPhee originally had, or whether he was referring to the newer furniture in his new office.

KK: I don't know myself, no, but I can find out.

AM: Oh, it doesn't make any difference, I just didn't ever know.

KK: When was the first time you saw Voorhis?

AM: Well, it probably was in that interim between while all of this work was going on in taking over of it for instance that was in the springtime so it would probably be oh sometime in that springtime also that we went down. I remember I had, Judy and Carol were quite young, and the other girls were older and away at school and so forth. They always remind me, the first place we had slept in what had been the Infirmary.

KK: Oh, down in Jerry Hall, yea [laughter]

AM: Uh huh; and all the equipment was still there. You know the table they used for—

KK: Examinations.

AM: Examination and all of this. They just had the best time you know.

KK: [laughter]

AM: I do remember, that was in the Spring because it rained quite heavily during the time we were there. Seems to me we stayed in different places different times you know each time we'd go down we'd be in a different apartment. I guess the last ones right next to the house that Mr. [Jerry] Voorhis owned.

KK: That's Aunt Nell.

AM: Was that Aunt Nell? I think Mr. Voorhis' secretary had formally lived in that apartment.

KK: I shouldn't wonder.

AM: I think so.

KK: It had a fireplace.

AM: Yes, uh huh.

KK: It had a shower in the hall.

AM: Yes.

KK: And in the closet, the clothes closet.

AM: Yes, then it had a bathroom too.

KK: That's right it had a bathroom too.

AM: That's the one. It was quite nice, quite comfortable.

KK: Which one was your favorite place? Did you have any?

AM: I think that probably was. Yes, it was more convenient you know what I mean? Then of course he used to bring; this when he was still chief of the bureau, he used to have meetings down there and the bureau people would come down and if it happened to be in the summertime the wives would be invited and the children, and then we would stay in the same places as the other people you know with the big sort of dormitories, we could put the children all in. Of course, they just loved it, enjoyed it.

KK: I'm sure they did.

AM: Enjoyed it so very much.

KK: It would be an ideal place for something like that.

AM: Yes, very lovely, and enjoyed it.

KK: How did you find the food down there when you ate there?

AM: At the dining hall?

KK: Yes, there's no real reason for my asking that except that's always an important part of the scene.

AM: Yes, it seemed to me it was always alright. I don't remember any complaints, only sometimes too much. [laughter]

KK: Alright.

AM: And of course, things like that and of course they just loved the swimming place and all. It was really like a summer vacation for them you know, they had a place to play, lots of room and all. If we wanted to go site seeing, why we'd get groups together and go off the campus during the day while the men were at meetings and so forth.

KK: When was the first Poly Vue you attended?

AM: Well, I'm sure I was at the first, but now when the date was, that I don't, I can't remember. But I think back it was more like a picnic you know. I do remember one, and which year it was I don't know where they had this man from – I remember he was a southern – he was going to cook the meat.

KK: The old southern barbeque.

AM: Yes, they do the pit kind. Well, whatever happened I don't know [laughter] but it had been cooking for hours and hours. They lit the fire of course the day before and finally when they went to serve it, they couldn't serve it, it was, it was not quite cooked.

KK: It wasn't? [laughter]

AM: No, it wasn't cooked so that cost a lot of—

KK: Could that have been John Lamiman that was doing that? He used to barbeque some of them.

AM: Yes, but no, he was some man from some college; I can't think of that name.

KK: What did they do? Did they have any meat to use?

AM: They had to take it out I guess as I remember and cook pieces, slice pieces finally because there weren't the crowds that you get that you have now at them, at all.

KK: They were probably a more tolerant type of individual.

AM: Oh, I think so more yes, and really, I guess, more or less, from people around in San Dimas and a few like that, that would be there rather [unintelligible] now I'm sure they come from all over the state like they do here, with the parents of the boys and girls that are at school. Don't you have big crowds now?

KK: Yes, we do.

AM: Uh huh.

KK: Between 10- and 12- and 20,000. I think they estimated 20,000. That's a lot of people.

AM: That's a lot of people yea.

KK: [unintelligible]

AM: Yea, that's it, uh huh. And then they had the, you know, the classrooms opened, and the library open. People viewed all the classrooms.

KK: Most of that was.

END OF TAPE 1 of 5 TAPES

START OF TAPE 2 of 5 TAPES

KK: We've just completed one side of this cassette, with Mrs. Alma McPhee, wife of President Julian McPhee, and she's been telling us some of her recollections and they are so interesting, that I've asked to continue and as we were just concluding the other side, the first side of the cassette, we were talking about the Poly Vues they had, and which undoubtedly were miniature replicas of the Poly Royals that were started up here at San Luis Obispo. So, I've asked Mrs. McPhee to go ahead and tell some more about those things that were happening down there.

AM: I also remember the long tables that they would have strewn out there on the lawn, where you could usually sit down to eat on the San Dimas campus. It was very pleasant. Everybody was very friendly and really got to know the people. When you meet like that, I think you do more so than when you get into the bigger crowds.

KK: I'm sure that's so and I think that's one thing that President McPhee always use to encourage, was the holding of many smaller groups.

AM: Yes, he wanted to sort of feel like a family, but of course as things grow larger, that seems to be almost impossible.

[laughter]

AM: I was going to say that different times when I have met some of the students, new students, they had that same remark to make, "Well this is the most friendly campus that we've ever been on." This had been students that I've talked to, that have transferred from one campus to the other. So, I am happy to feel that they are carrying out that tradition of speaking to one another. I remember Julian always saying, to the boys at that time, "Be sure and speak to one another, say hello to one another as you pass one another on the campus. Even if they're not a close friend of yours." He always impressed that on them. He felt it was quite the thing to do, especially somebody's first time away from home and things like that.

KK: I think I sensed that when I first came out here, because back in other areas it was kind of everybody shoving and shouldering and on his own way.

AM: Yea.

KK: When I came out here, why I'd be going along and a student would say hi, or good morning and so on.

AM: Yea.

KK: So, it was a very pleasant bunch.

AM: Yes, I think so too. Especially first time away from home for the first time, it would be kind of nice to have somebody.

KK: That's right. Down there at Voorhis there's a story that goes, that I might try to authenticate here if I can. When it goes, down there at Voorhis, anytime President McPhee wanted to call a faculty meeting, all he needed to do was to stick his head out the window and holler.

AM: [laughter]

KK: Whistle some people say.

[laughter]

AM: Well, I don't think that was actually true, but I think it had seemed that way.

KK: Or it could have been true.

AM: You could have done it that way. They were really in such a compact living way you know, right there like living sort of together at a country club. The beautiful lawn and the lovely homes and so forth.

KK: Do you remember the time when that outdoor amphitheater was built down in the canyon behind the administration building?

AM: Yes.

KK: What did they used to have out there?

AM: Let me see, I remembered attending something down there. I remember actually going down there and attending something and I'm trying to think, what that was. I'm sure it was some form of entertainment; you know that the students had put on.

KK: Yea, some program.

AM: A program that they had put on, but just actually what it was, I just can't recollect.

KK: I don't know if I ever told you or President McPhee this but one time, we had an acoustical engineer there at a conference who had done the acoustic engineering for Robin Hood Dell back in St. Louis for one of the outdoor amphitheaters in Chicago and so on. So, I asked him to check

the acoustics of that outdoor theatre there. He did with his instruments, and he said that that was probably as perfect a little cup full of acoustics there as he'd ever seen, with the trees

AM: With the trees. Oh, uh huh. Of course, this was just recently was it?

KK: No, no.

AM: Was it sometime...because at one time, the trees were not up I don't think as high as they are now.

KK: That was a long time ago in fact it must have been seven or eight years ago?

AM: Oh, uh huh.

KK: But he really felt it was an excellent place and, I've often thought that would be an ideal place for maybe a Shakespearian slow dance, wouldn't it?

AM: That's what I was going to say.

KK: Wouldn't it?

AM: I just thought of that because we had that company from San Francisco were down here, they stayed all week and we had two performances; *Midsummer Night's Dream*, and *As You Like It*, outdoors in an afternoon last week.

KK: Isn't that nice?

AM: My daughter Carol, who is very interested in those things, just loved it, didn't miss one bit of them. Attended all of them, she said they were really very good.

KK: I think we'll get back to more and more of that. I hope we're hitting a cycle of return. But at any rate, I remember that outdoor amphitheater back there and believe you me, those Baptists [Pacific Baptist Bible College] are going to use that.

AM: Oh, I think it would come in beautifully for something like that, wouldn't it?

KK: Yes, it would.

AM: Is this a college?

KK: Yes, well it isn't, it's a Bible School.

AM: It's a Bible School

KK: Yes.

AM: Is it all just teachings of the Bible of every phase of it or is it.

KK: Yes, it's not what we know as a college. It's a school where both ministerial students and lay leaders can come and study about the Bible.

AM: Yes, I see.

KK: And study theology and study as ministers and teachers.

AM: Oh, I see, uh huh.

KK: Thought I don't think they do any ordinations.

AM: Do any ordination?

KK: No.

AM: Uh huh, I see.

KK: They're a good bunch they're sort of medium-conservative bunch. They're not what we used to call hard shell.

AM: Had they been in, um—

KK: Pasadena.

AM: Oh, I see ah huh. So, they'd been well established?

KK: Yes, oh many years, they're not a new thing.

AM: Oh, uh huh.

KK: But they were getting too large for their location and they operated in one of those great big old mansion districts there and they had a beautiful place there, but it just wasn't large enough, so they got this on a five-year lease and was the agreement that they would do certain things about the utilities, and the maintenance of the grounds, and things like so with the hope and expectation that when the five years is over, the state will reclaim it and the state will have more money then [unintelligible].

AM: To work, uh huh.

KK: While the [Cal Poly Educational] Center was over there, we had to operate under self-support, and we did, but when they moved the center operation over to Kellogg West, for which it was being prepared, then it was empty and a drain on the state. So that was their solution to it. I think, under the circumstances, they are very happy.

AM: I would think so too. Because I think there'd be people that would care for it.

KK: Correct.

AM: And things like that, that will be much.

KK: They'll use a lot of student help on the grounds and as I recall it, they'll have somewhere around three-hundred student there. Over half of them.

AM: Serve their meals there?

KK: That right, over half of them will live there.

AM: Uh huh, Oh wow.

KK: So, if it's occupied that way it will be well taken care of.

AM: Yes, it should be well taken care of, but I should think that would be a satisfactory arrangement then.

KK: I think that Jerry Voorhis had been reconciled to it. He would have preferred I think having Lark Ellen Boys School there. But I'm on the record, yet I'm off the record when I say gosh, I think that would have been one of the most horrible mistakes he ever made.

AM: What is that?

KK: It's a school for homeless boys and juvenile court warrants.

AM: Oh yes, I wouldn't think that would be.

KK: Just imagine Lark Ellen on one side of the canyon, and the McKinley home on the other.

AM: Uh huh, yea.

KK: Boy wouldn't that have been a dark and bloody ground.

AM: Wouldn't it? I should say so.

KK: [laughter]

AM: Yea, this I think will work out much more to his satisfaction then yes, uh huh.

KK: Now I'm wondering, is there one outstanding event, in your memory about Voorhis?

[slight pause]

KK: Or, ah, one of a few outstanding?

AM: Well, I can think about that one day, when this picture in here, of the day the plaque was out there at that, I'm sure it's still there.

KK: Yes, it is. The brass plaque inset in the boulder right there.

AM: In that big, in that boulder uh huh, right there and—

KK: That was a momentous day.

AM: That's what I thought, I thought it was quite a momentous day.

KK: Did they have any particular ceremonies or?

AM: Yes, as I said it's all [unintelligible] in here. It perpetuates the knowledge of the Voorhis Cal Poly Campus gift to the state. It said there were more than, oh I remember the crowds that day, and it says right here that four thousand visited, tour of the education exhibits and joined in the all-day festivities at the eighth open; this was at the same time of a Poly Vue you see.

KK: Yes, uh huh.

AM: The highlight of the day's activities, was the dedication of this Voorhis memorial plaque in front of the college administration building. Someone names [Ernest] Geddes, Charles Voorhis of Pasadena, donor of the school was present at the time.

KK: I don't think that Mr. McPhee ever knew it, but that plaque was stolen twice.

AM: Was it?

KK: Yes. The sheriff's office found it for us on one occasion and then I forget who else found it for us and so they finally bolted it in concrete, and nobody's ever bothered it since.

AM: But imagine that, taking it.

KK: Yes.

AM: A plaque like that.

KK: They found it in some kids' bedroom, nothing against it, he just thought it was a trophy.

AM: Here's the lettering on the plaque. It tells just what it says and um.

KK: Who supplied that plaque, did the college or did Uncle Charlie [Charles B. Voorhis], do you remember? [pause] I have a hunch that it was the college that had supplied it.

[pause]

AM: I think, the college supplied it, and had it made and then engraved.

KK: That's right, and they might have had it made.

AM: Yes, another event I remembered is the day that they, just the family were present, and this was after Aunt Nell [Ella Voorhis] had passed away and they had that picture put up and dedicated there. There was a plaque there, isn't there dedicated to her?

KK: Yes, yes, and a little collection of books.

AM: Of books, yes that were in her.

KK: Hal [Harold] Wells and I saw to it that that little collection of books and that picture and so on, were transferred to Kellogg, and are in the archives.

AM: In the archives, yea well that's good.

KK: So, if anyone ever asks you, why you know that they are safe.

AM: They're there, uh huh. Well, that was another one that I remembered that was very impressive, I thought it was an honor that was due her. She was always so interested in the school you know.

KK: Did you ever read *The Five Little Peppers and How They Grew*?

AM: Yea.

KK: Did you?

AM: You mean the little story?

KK: YEA!

AM: Yes, uh huh.

KK: I've found somebody else who's read it. But to me, the same spirit that permeated the five little peppers group there, permeated Voorhis.

AM: Voorhis, yes.

KK: And the more I dig into it, [unintelligible].

AM: I had come in from Chicago and also the doctor was there and one of her youngsters, of course I do not remember the name at the present [unintelligible] at that time.

KK: When was the first time you ever saw Jerry [Voorhis]?

AM: [pause] You mean after we had.

KK: The first time you ever saw Jerry.

AM: Well, I saw him when he was a congressman.

KK: Under what circumstances?

AM: We happened to be, not that we were involved at the Voorhis School at that time, but we were back there, on some business in Washington in the education there, While Jul was at different meetings, I went around visiting places, went into the; the Congress was in session and went in and I did not meet him, but I saw him at that time, so that the first time I ever saw him.

KK: Now when was the first time you ever met him?

AM: As I can remember, [unintelligible] at this time, out there at Voorhis, at the day of the memorial. [unintelligible]. That day I remember meeting him personally.

KK: What was your personal impression of Jerry? How did you react to him? I'm saying this not as a challenge, I'm merely making this as part of the scenery.

AM: I felt that he was a very interesting person, and you would have to, but rather difficult to know at first acquaintance to me he appeared to be a person that would take a little time to get acquainted with. I think that was my impression.

KK: That was one of his, one of his weak parts as a politician.

AM: I think I would judge so. I don't really know but I would judge so. Course having met many politicians, I felt [laughter] they were very aggressive, outgoing type of people. But he would be very honest, very sincere man in whatever he may be doing.

KK: Very devoted to his ideals.

AM: Yes, very devoted to his ideals.

KK: Yes. What did you feel was his feeling about Cal Poly taking over the campus? Do you suppose that he was as enthusiastic or more enthusiastic than Uncle Charlie [Charles B. Voorhis] or was there any difference?

AM: Uh, well I don't think I would be able to judge that because as I said I met him that day and there wasn't anything you know, discussed about that subject. I was trying to remember if Julian ever said anything to me in that regard.

KK: That was going to be my next question, do you know what your husband's reactions—

AM: Well, that's what I mean.

KK: You anticipated me there that Jerry was probably quite enthusiastic in the beginning and that it had been taken care of in that way, and it would be used for really for education of the boys, because it was originally established for the young people and boys especially.

KK: Yes, I can recall. One reason I like Cal Poly at first so well, [unintelligible] and you could do things with them and take them out on field trips. You couldn't do at that time, was mix sex and now you can do it [laughter].

AM: Now you can do it [laughter].

[laughter]

AM: Oh dear, Mr. Kitch, I often wonder what my husband would do, I think of it, he was fairly particular when he brought those girls in. That they were absolutely going to live on that campus their freshman year and the boys are not allowed upstairs. Now they have, what you call, The "Open Door."

KK: Correct.

AM: And I just often wonder, I've heard people say that oh he would have to change with the times, but I have my doubts.

KK: [laughter], I do too. Isabelle and I have talked about that.

AM: I have my doubts very definitely.

KK: I don't think he would ever have changed that much.

AM: I don't think so, no sir, I don't think so at all. So of course, there are many, many changes.

KK: That's right.

AM: In you know, all sorts of ways, and uh.

KK: I've always felt that I was particularly blessed in not having to bring young people up in this era.

AM: Oh, I would too.

KK: I think my children would have frustrated me to no end.

AM: Oh, it would have been real difficult during their teenage years, uh huh. Yea, I know I listened to my own youngster talking about their youngsters you know.

KK: Yea, as a grandmother?

AM: Yea and I just sit and listen, and think, well, I sure was happy I got the [laughter].

[laughter]

KK: It's their problem now

AM: It's their problem yea [laughter] but I got through. So far, they seem to be doing pretty well but I, of course some of them are young yet and I don't know, time will tell. [laughter]

KK: That's right. Alright, let me ask you this question. Is there any question that you wish I had asked you, and I didn't?

[pause]

AM: No, [pause] no, I can't think of anything right now. I can't, you know.

KK: Now of course we'll have an opportunity to pursue it further this evening, but if there is, if there is some comment you'd like to make or some point you would like to make, why please do so. Otherwise, we'll consider this [unintelligible] afternoon broadcast [laughter] into many, many centuries.

AM: Yea.

KK: Who knows, maybe someday, they'll take this cassette into [unintelligible]

AM: No, I can't think of it. [unintelligible] I remember sometimes things would be very frustrating for him, you know what I mean? Everything would be going wrong, but he always seemed to be able to come out on the other side and get things going again.

KK: Would he come home and get a renewal of his courage at home?

AM: Yes, uh huh.

KK: I'm sure of that.

AM: Well, if there was anything that he would have to go fight for, well he was right there.

KK: Yea.

AM: He just, always could manage to.

KK: Harold Wilson and I at one time agreed that we felt that President McPhee actually enjoyed a fight, a good fight.

AM: Oh, I think he did too. I think he did. If he felt he were on the right side and arguing for it, I think he did too, yea. And if he were sure of that whatever he was going after was the right thing he would go; nothing would stop him.

KK: All 12 cylinders.

AM: He'd go.

KK: Well, you ought to know.

AM: Yea.

[laughter]

KK: Well, thank you very much. This has worked out just about right from a time standpoint on the cassette, and we'll have some fresh stuff for this evening.

AM: I hope it's what you were looking for.

KK: It's exactly what I was looking for.

END OF TAPE 2 OF 5 TAPES

START OF TAPE 3 OF 5 TAPES

KK: We are in the home of Mrs. Julian McPhee, on the hills overlooking San Luis Obispo where she and her husband spent so many years developing Cal Poly and its great campuses into an institution of higher learning known throughout the world. For instance, in particular and, in many instances, unique approaches to separation of careers and people. This afternoon, we discussed in particular, the Voorhis Campus and the part that President McPhee played in it and the memories of Mrs. McPhee as she accompanied him and this evening, I'm going to ask Mrs. McPhee [unintelligible] President McPhee as a man, and trace his life, and we will ask her questions about him, but right now I want her to start out, the first time that she ever met Julian McPhee and go on from there.

AM: We met at a birthday party of a cousin of mine in San Francisco in October of 19 [laughter] ah 14.

KK: 1914, ok

AM: Yea, and uh [pause] I was asked, he still hadn't finished college at the University of California at that time and was just entering his sophomore or had just entered his sophomore year there. I went to private school, a girls' school over in Oakland. We seemed to, after I had been there, I came to my cousins' party. My cousin wanted me there, and I wasn't anxious to go because I really wasn't acquainted with all of her friends, and I had a girlfriend visiting me over this weekend so anyway, we decided to go, but we were rather bored throughout the evening and we, when the time for refreshments were served, my aunt called to me and said to come on

downstairs and here was Julian playing, sitting, playing the piano. I still can remember the piece he was playing "*By the Sea, By the Beautiful Sea*" [laughter]. Do you remember that?

KK: Yes, I do.

AM: [laughter] It shows how far back. So anyway, my cousin had arranged all of this, ah planed that I should be his supper partner for the evening and I still didn't want to go. So anyway, I did, and we had a nice time and so I'm at the table. So, then a very sad incident happened, my dad had a heart attack and passed away [unintelligible]. Julian had known a younger brother of mine, he was a very good friend of his younger brother, so they had known of the death of my father. So, Julian came by to see me at that time. So, that's where our romance started from then on and all through his college days. We attended many things at the university, social affairs, with friends of his and mine. Of course, in those days, we had mostly house parties. His family had a basement at the house, his mother had six ladies, sort of a club brewing for the boys of the family would invite their friends and they had somebody come in and play the piano and we'd have coffee and dances there. Then, in summertime, my family would go off sometimes and cross over into Marin County for the summer months and Julian of course would go back and forth there, and during vacation, he would work and come over usually on the weekends. Then very often we went up to the Russian River.

KK: Oh yes.

AM: To a resort up there called Rio Nita, and the same thing, he had worked I guess for his brother during the summer vacation.

KK: What did his brother do?

AM: Well, it had originally been, his father's business, American Stevedoring Company in San Francisco.

KK: Oh yes, I remember that now.

AM: Then the brother, after his father passed away, the brother was then the manager. His mother was of course the owner of it, so he worked for him there and then as the years went along and in 1918, we were married.

KK: In other words, you went together four years?

AM: Uh huh, [unintelligible] in the meantime during [unintelligible] of course he graduated from college and his first teaching position was up in Placerville, in El Dorado county. He had a motorcycle that he would ride up there and then come down on the weekends on his motorcycle. [laughter]

KK: The motorcycles nowadays are not new, are they?

AM: I still remember him wanting me to ride on it, but I never would. I went to the convent and I had an argument with a nun that taught me, and I guess motorcycles were just coming to [unintelligible] at that time, and she used to say that you girls don't ever ride on these motorcycles.

KK: [someone entered the room] Hi, how are you?

AM: Hi.

KK: Just at this point Mrs. McPhee's 32nd grandchild, Monica Taber, a little tot of what, three, four?

AM: She will be three in October.

KK: Will be three in October, came in with her mother and they are visiting here. So, we stopped for a visit with Monica and her mother, and now we are ready to resume again and Mrs. McPhee you were telling us right, that you had a courtship of almost five years and then you were married. Can you tell us when you were married, where, and so on and go on from there? You husband had been a teacher or was a teacher at Placerville.

AM: Placerville, then the World War I came along [unintelligible] people that had known him in his later life, that he wanted to get into the Navy. So, he went down, this was before we had the [unintelligible] so he went down, he left Placerville to come down to sign up for the Navy and they wouldn't except him because he wasn't heavy enough.

KK: Uh huh. Underweight huh?

AM: Underweight.

KK: Goodness sake.

AM: So, he really was very anxious just to get into this certain branch. So, he came home and went to bed for a day or two and drank cream and ate bananas.

KK: [laughter]

AM: And, went down back to the recruiting station and weighed in [laughter] correctly.

KK: Made it, huh? [laughter]

AM: Yea and made it.

KK: That sounds like a boxer doesn't it, getting ready for his fight.

AM: So, then he went on into the Navy there and uh, I presume because he had been a teacher, when he went to San Pedro where this naval station was, why they put him in charge of helping out some of the boys with their mathematics. So, he was there a number of months. Of course, they went through boot camp and the regular procedure. Then after he [unintelligible] out every once in a while, get a furlough and come on up, come by train you know, take you a day and a half to get there. Then he went on and took the examinations for officers training. Then he went through his officers' training there and was commissioned in the Navy. Then we were married, in November of 1918 in San Francisco at Saint Peter's Church. Then he was stationed there put on to a destroyer.

KK: And he was in the Navy when you were married, as an officer?

AM: Yes, it was a naval wedding and so forth.

KK: With five years courtship, it wasn't a wartime rush thing?

AM: No!

[laughter]

AM: No, it wasn't. We went on back to San Diego, he only had so many days and had to report back. He was on a destroyer there in San Diego. That was my first experience of being away from home and family. How many of us, there were ten that time, there were about five still at home and to be separated and course he had to go out to sea duty and be officer of the day and deck, so I was many a lonely day [laughter] that I had. Course San Diego at that time was really what you might call small community, small town and the people that I met, happened to meet, seemed to me were all retired and moved out to San Diego for the climate and their health at retirement time. So, at that time there were really very few young people that I had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with. Then an order would come in that the boat, ship, the destroyer was leaving so I just packed up my little bag and get on the train and go home to San Francisco. Seem like I'd be there maybe a week, I'd get a telephone call and he's out in the San Francisco Bay.

KK: Ahhh.

AM: The boats were there.

KK: Out at Treasure Island or someplace like that?

AM: Yes, uh huh and then he was put in charge of commissioning space, a destroyer out over there at Treasure Island. Of course, then we were there for some time. And of course, it was then getting near to the end of the war time. I can remember Armistice evening we were, his brother had told him, he had loaned him his car, he had a Maxwell, and we were going to go out with another couple. And he put the car standing out in front of the house and when we came out to get into it, the car was gone, somebody had stolen it [laughter]

KK: Oh my, the Maxwell could be quite a sporty car.

AM: Yea, oh yea, at that time uh huh. There weren't too many cars running around, I know we didn't have one. His brother I suppose had us because he lives in Burlingame and used it back and forth, commuting. It was business.

KK: Did he ever recover the car?

AM: Yes, they recovered it. I've forgotten how long since. So, then I felt that I didn't want him in the Navy because I felt that he'd be sent from here to there and so I—

KK: Did he consider it as a career?

AM: Well to stay in the reserves he felt that he might rather do that, but I had no one above us that had stayed in the reserves rather women whose husbands who had stayed in the reserves and they had advised me not to contend to it because they had to go for so many times a year you

know and go on these two-week trips and things like that. So, we talked it over and decided not to. So, then he went back to the University of California and thought maybe he instead of going back to his teaching, he would go into farm advising. So, that's when he went down to Merced and went into farm advising.

KK: Now there's a little point that I would like to deal with here. Here he was a city boy, this son of a Stevedore Company who had gone to the University, not at Davis but Berkeley.

AM: Yea, he had gone partly to Davis too you know.

KK: Oh, he had?

AM: They used to go up there, which I didn't mention because I had been to a couple of the Davis picnics when he was up there and me being a city girl, we go around looking at the stock and I remember going into the poultry department and they would color the tails of these chickens to distinguish them, and of course he had me believing that they came like that you know.

[laughter]

KK: Colored to show which one was getting what feed and so on and so forth.

AM: What belonged to who and so forth. I was fully convinced, and I came down home and telling my family and they just thought it was the funniest thing.

KK: Yea.

AM: They had heard.

KK: Pardon me—

AM: How he happened to be interested in agriculture?

KK: How did he become interested in agriculture?

AM: Ah, well, his dad, just when he was going to retire, had bought the place; I'm sure you heard him talk about it, "The Uvas"?

KK: Yes.

AM: Out of Santa Clara County.

KK: Yes.

AM: Acreage up there, in the hills. It's about 25 miles from San Jose, about 15 or so from Gilroy.

KK: Ah huh.

AM: You know, right up in those hills.

KK: Beautiful country.

AM: Beautiful country. He bought about four-hundred and fifty acres, and that of course was when Julian was a boy. I think his dad passed away when Jul was about twelve, and all the years after that, while they were growing up his mother kept that place and had oh, different families up there supposedly taking care of it. That was how Julian thought that he was going to go to the university and take agriculture and learn all about it. They of course spent many months up there every year you see. He felt well that was what he would do. They had cherries, they had apples, and he would tell stories about how he would pick the cherries you know and then they'd drive down into Morgan Hill.

KK: Yea.

AM: Which was the closest town and sell the cherries. Of course, that was the means of conveyance from San Francisco was by horse.

KK: Horse and buggy.

AM: And buggy or train. So, that's when he became interested in agriculture.

KK: Well good.

AM: And so, then of course at the time, he had grown up. As I said, the family had rented it out, and leased it out over these years, but it wasn't very well taken care of at all. They had sort of neglected it and so forth. So, it meant that they would have to have a great deal of money to get started in it. Jul says well he would go and do his teaching and that's how he happened to; he took all of the work for teaching, all of his credentials for that. So then, after the War and he went and decided he could go into farm advising with the same credentials so that is when he went and that position was open in Merced—

KK: Merced, ok.

AM: And that's where we went, to Merced. That's where Helen was born.

KK: And that's your first child?

AM: Yes.

KK: Ok, and now we're here at this point.

AM: And that was a story told about how he was out fighting fire [laughter]

[laughter]

AM: Had been waiting all day long, and all day long and the inexperience, I didn't have enough sense to call the doctor you know so, finally of course when he came home, he called the doctor and doctor said rush me to the hospital and so forth and that was where Helen was born. So, then I was there. She was born in May. It started the warm, warm weather you know, and it got so very hot and I just didn't like it I just really couldn't stand the real hot weather that they had there. So, that's when we decided that well maybe you should find another place and go back to his old love of teaching. By that time, he decided that himself that that was his vocation; his teaching that he really enjoyed teaching the young boys and girls. So, then I guess he just

applied at the university and they gave him a number of places and he picked Gilroy because it was near our San Francisco, home as we always say. So that's where we really settled down then.

KK: So, he came back to settle down and close to where he and sadly had the farm at one time.

AM: Oh yes, we used to go up every, oh very often. There were some people near and about that had known his family you know. And the folks still go up there. Victor, Dr. McPhee, has a home built up there, a summer home. He goes up there all the time and Julian, was thinking of [unintelligible] talking about widening some of the roads and getting a mobile home and taking that up there. And there were creeks through it and there used to be an old vineyard of course the apples and all of those things have just gone to wood you know because.

KK: Now they are wood?

AM: And just all the groves have grown up there. I remember one time when we were in Gilroy, there was a fire up there and he and a young friend of his teacher, drove up to see how far it was and they were fortunate they didn't get caught up there, the fire was on all sides of them you know. It really burnt out quite a bit of the brush that grown in there, but they still own the whole, the family. A certain amount belongs to each one.

KK: How many brothers and sisters did Mr. McPhee have?

AM: He had three brothers and three sisters, there were seven of them.

KK: How many of them, are still alive?

AM: Just the one brother.

KK: Just the one brother.

AM: And the three girls.

KK: And the three girls

AM: Are still alive.

KK: And which brother was that?

AM: The doctor, he was the young one in the family, Dr. Victor McPhee,

KK: He's an M.D., is he?

AM: Yes, he's a pediatrician.

KK: A pediatrician?

AM: In San Francisco, he's 72 this year and still practicing.

KK: Goodness me.

AM: Yea, I said, "Victor why don't you retire?" and he said, "What will I do if I retire?"

KK: [laughter]

AM: Of course, he does take little trips now and again you know and go places but his wife doesn't like to travel and so he says "I don't like to go off by myself" so, anyway, he's still at it he says.

KK: Where are the three sisters?

AM: They are home in San Francisco, living in their home where they were all born.

KK: Is that right?

AM: It's now his oldest brother would have been 86 this year and Mrs. McPhee came there as a bride and the children were all born there so that house must be nearly ninety years of age.

KK: That's a real family home isn't it?

AM: Yes, uh huh. One of these old Victorian types you know.

KK: Lots of trees.

AM: Yes, great big rooms.

KK: High ceilings.

AM: And high ceilings yea. When I renew their curtains, I have to have them made. You can't possibly buy the [laughter] ones made up. It's quite a responsibility, the upkeep of it, you know, because there are so many things that may need replacing that you can't replace; you know they have the windows, the type that they used to have with the [unintelligible] in them you know.

KK: Oh, you mean the window weights?

AM: Yea, the window weights things. If something goes wrong with the window, they have a terrible time to get anybody that knows anything about those things.

KK: That's right, I hadn't thought of that.

AM: Yea, Uh huh.

KK: Very few of those anymore, I think. I think they call those window weights.

AM: Yes, but it's going to becoming quite difficult for them because Mary is the youngest of the family and she is next to Victor, she's 72 this year, no, Victor is 74 that's right. There's just about two years difference between them. Then there is Elly. She's the only one of the girls that married. Her name is Mrs. Seifert and, she's 80. Anita, the oldest one, is 84, she was 84 in May.

KK: All three of them are living down at the family home?

AM: They are living together on the farm, the family home and they are getting to this point of you know, thinking, well if one of us becomes an invalid, which is quite possible at that age, it's real difficult with the upstairs and the downstairs you know to take care of anybody like that. So

then, last time I was up there, first time I've ever heard them speak of trying to—thinking maybe they may go into an apartment. So, that's the way it stands.

KK: That again, as the story goes so often, those great big Victorian beautiful houses.

AM: Yes, they last on forever. With some of the houses they are building now though, I can assure you.

KK: How about your family? How many brothers and sisters?

AM: I have five brothers.

KK: Five brothers?

AM: Ah huh and three sisters. There were nine of us.

KK: My goodness.

AM: I have three brothers still alive, and one sister. There are four of us.

KK: You were all pretty much a Bay Area family?

AM: Yes, my grandfather on my father's side, Doyle, he came to San Francisco in 1849.

KK: He's a "49er". Did he come out to mine gold?

AM: With his bride, came around the horn and all, my father, Stanley, were born in San Francisco. They at that time, lived down; you know where the old mint is on the corner?

KK: I do.

AM: Well, that's where they were born, my grandfather.

KK: On that location?

AM: On that location. Then he stayed there, and he was a contractor and builder there and so was my father. The last building that my father had the contract for, was the Clift Hotel.

KK: Is that right?

AM: Standing on the corner of Taylor and Geary.

KK: That's right.

AM: And he built that building, that was his last, he had a heart attack [unintelligible] just about at the end [unintelligible] and then his brother took over and they, the boys went in which was [unintelligible] and then the customs in there years ago following their father's footsteps and the boys in the family went over into their father's business.

KK: Grandfather's milk business for their son.

AM: Yes, oh yes, it was just a tradition.

KK: That's right. Alright, now, we have you at Gilroy.

AM: Gilroy, yea.

KK: Will you take us on from there? Let me say this, I've had reports from people in the Gilroy area who went to Mr. McPhee as a teacher and they said that he was a very exacting teacher, but that he was a very good teacher. Don't you suppose that some of his formatives, educational habits, were coming into flower there that he carried right on through?

AM: I think so, yes, uh huh. We weren't there very long when he was Vice Principal. He was in charge of all the discipline there at the school, and taught night school as well, and we had a small ranch there, fruit trees. I guess it was about six acres; bought the home on it. It's out on Wellborn Avenue. I wonder if when you go through there when you're going north, there's this big, B & G Company, a great big structural iron company.

KK: I don't recall that at all.

AM: You probably wouldn't notice it if you're driving.

KK: We will from now on, I assure ya.

AM: Well down along that lane, is where we had this six acres of prunes and chickens. I still remember the time of harvesting the prunes that Helen and Bernadette; were the little ones then.

KK: Bernadette had come along at Gilroy?

AM: Yes, she was born in San Francisco, but we were living in Gilroy on the 4th of July, she just had her fiftieth birthday the other day. So, he would say to them; he'd be plowing you know, around in the evenings or Sunday afternoons, "Don't put your foot on that." He didn't want them to get in there and get all messed up in the—

[laughter]

AM: He made them mind you know. Of course, they'd always say now, the four of them, the four oldest got all the discipline and when Judy and Carol came along, he was too busy down here to have any discipline for them [laughter].

KK: Well, seems to me you kind of took over as I recall it.

AM: Yea, I tried to do what I could.

[laughter]

KK: Alright, now how long were you at Gilroy?

AM: That's what I'm trying to think, let me see, it must have been five years, five years and he got this uh—

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AM: Dick Werner at that time, had had, was temporarily in this position as I remembered. Then he started in under him until he got going on it, and then he.

KK: Now what was his official title then?

AM: He was Head of the Bureau of Ag[ricultural] Education.

KK: Did they call him “Chief” in that day, or?

AM: Oh, that kind of started in you know, as he appointed these men his supervisors. Well, his duties then, he just went all over the state. I remember Helen—one time somebody, she was about maybe five or six, it must have been after we left Gilroy, and somebody said, “What does your daddy do?” And she said, “Well, he drives, and he drives, and he talks, and he talks.”

KK: [laughter]

AM: And we took the little ones before they started school. I would go along and take them along with me. Everybody lifted up their eyes, “How do you manage all those three?” And I’d say, “Oh we get along alright.” When Jean was oh, maybe a year old. So, anyway, you might say it’s just like a salesman. He went around from high school to high school and had to talk to the principal and telling them the advantages of this type of education. Then of course it was up to the principal whether they wanted to and of course, of the appropriation they would get to the [unintelligible] act. So, that’s what he did and of course, I went with him. Of course, when the children started school, I wasn’t able to go as often. Once in a while, if I could get a good babysitter, I could go along. Anyway, that’s the way he started out. Sometimes he’d be gone ten days for instance if he had to go way up into Susanville you know, and way up in there. The cars couldn’t go as fast as they do nowadays.

KK: Then, if I recall, he had to go clear around by Reno, didn’t he to get there?

AM: [laughter] Yes, uh huh. Yea, around in that way.

KK: Southern California, of course.

AM: One time I remember when we went to Southern California, we went down there and rented an apartment out in Glendale. The children were then in the first, second, and third grades and we transferred them to a school there in Glendale and rented a furnished apartment and then he went all around. You know, I’m sure you know in Los Angeles at that time they had so many little farms.

KK: Yea, family farms.

AM: And all the little backyards, family farms and so forth.

KK: Suburban farms.

AM: Yes, uh huh. And of course, during all of this time, you see he was trying to get this Future Farmer business going and of course the university was fighting him because they had their 4-H.

KK: 4-H, yes.

AM: That was a big competition there.

[laughter]

KK: And they also felt he kind of deserted the [unintelligible] service and the farm advising.

[laughter]

AM: Into farm advice, but after he got into that, there wasn't enough challenge in it for him. Did you ever meet Wally Grass?

KK: Yes, I knew Wally.

AM: Well Wally was his boss there in Merced.

KK: Huh.

AM: And of course, we were always very great friends. Not many months before Julian was retiring, but we were out with Wally and his wife. Course, he's passed away since then.

KK: Mr. McPhee was always very close with the Farm Bureau and he was always close with the Grange.

AM: Always close with the Grange. Well, he formed the one, in Gilroy, the Grange.

KK: The Grange?

AM: Yes.

KK: The Grange people always remembered that.

AM: And Vern Meacham was a cadet teacher under him in Gilroy.

KK: Oh.

AM: I remember that. And then, when he got all these courses established, in the high schools throughout the state. There were very few principals that weren't impressed with what he presented to them and the appropriation they would get. Of course, the school districts have to match the money and so forth for the salary of these teachers. Well then of course—

KK: And they had to meet certain qualifications.

AM: Yes, and then it got so big that that's when he started to be the supervisor with the [unintelligible] superintendent of the schools and asked about it, if it were possible and one of them situated in points around the state and he had one down south to Los Angeles and one up north in Chico. Fort Rim is up there, Edward down south, Bob Dendy, and Fresno.

KK: I know all those fellas. I'd say lasted through the years.

AM: Yes, uh huh. Bob did pass away about a year ago.

KK: Alright, now here's a point I think we ought to bring up. As nearly as I can understand it, it was Julian McPhee who built the Vocational Agricultural Program in California.

AM: In California, yes.

KK: Now I think that is something that ought to be emphasized.

AM: Yes, he definitely did. Because as I said he went around to every one of these high schools and brought these programs in. Then of course all the rest of us worked out from there and another one was Howard Chapel.

KK: Oh yes.

AM: Was another regional man. He'd been at San Jose [State]. At one time, these supervisors were situated in the state colleges, they had offices in those state colleges.

KK: Like Fresno State, and Chico State, L.A.

AM: Like Fresno State, Chico State, I was trying to think, was L.A. State in existence then?

KK: No, it was Los Angeles State College of something or other.

AM: But no, something, yea, uh huh. And San Jose [State].

KK: Yes, San Diego [State].

AM: San Diego, then up in Chico [State].

KK: Yea.

AM: Yea.

KK: Did he have any up at Humboldt [State]?

AM: Humboldt, Humboldt, no I think the one in Chico would have that territory. See, they had a certain territory.

KK: Yes.

AM: To take care of as I remember and understand, they were supposed to supervise these teachers, and see that they were carrying on the program as it should be carried on you see. The boys that were in this program, were supposed to have projects, and they had to oversee all of these projects. These boys had to keep books, accounts on the things so that very often, a lot of those boys didn't go beyond high school and they were able to help their dads out in running a small farm or ranch. I think that was about it, those are the ones that I remember.

KK: Now, as I recall, the next problem that he ran into, and maybe one in which he was already conscience, was the need for more Ag teachers.

AM: Yes.

KK: Local teachers.

AM: Yes, for a place for teachers training.

KK: That's right.

AM: So, it just happened that this fair at San Luis Obispo came up at this time, so, he was very interested when Chris Jespersen approached him.

KK: Now Chris Jespersen was the state representative?

AM: Representative, in this district, here.

KK: In this district. He lived in Atascadero, didn't he?

AM: Yes, He lived in Atascadero, uh huh. He was first assemblyman and then went into the senate and was senator of this district. Of course, at this time, they had uh, the enrollment had gone down here at the school, which I've heard people express, a glorified high school at the time. The legislatures were complaining about the amount of money that was being used, for so few students, and quite a good size faculty. I remember when Jul came down here on inspection, we were down here quite a few summers, years before we ever moved down here just to see. The farm was being neglected, fences were down, things like that. So anyway, after many discussions at the state legislature, they had asked if he could come down here and run it, take it over. Well of course he had to have the consent of Mr. Cursey.

KK: Yea, Vernon Cursey.

AM: Vernon Cursey. He had been down here too with Julian to see the place. So, that's when they finally gave him the budget, they gave him, \$7,500.00 to run it.

KK: For a year?

AM: For a year.

KK: [laughter]

AM: That's when as I said he had Howie O'Daniels. Then as time went on, he got a little more money for appropriation and he got J.I. Thompson. [unintelligible] then he just worked from there on.

KK: Livestock specialist.

AM: Livestock specialist. Dick Leach was here finishing school in the Poultry department and he put Dick Leach in. When Dick retired last year, he was 41 years.

KK: 41 years at Cal Poly?

AM: Yes, um hmm.

KK: Now there another instrument here that we ought to be sure and get in the record one way or the other. We always understood that President McPhee believed in Cal Poly so strongly that he offered the legislature to come down here at no salary, just simply add it on to his present work?

AM: That's right

KK: If they would give him that \$7,500.00?

AM: And still continued to run the Bureau.

KK: That's right

AM: As long as he could get it to set up his teacher training,

KK: Yea.

AM: And a place for his Future Farmers to meet and his Ag teachers to meet.

KK: Yea, so that was accurate?

AM: That was when, yes that was accurate, absolutely, had no difference in his salary, when he was up in the state.

KK: In other words, so essentially, he just volunteered his presidency.

AM: Very often people would say, but oh, you have that house, we did not, we paid \$125.00 a month rent for that house.

KK: You did? On campus?

AM: Yes.

KK: At that time? Good Lord.

AM: Yes.

KK: That was heavy rent then wasn't it?

AM: Yes, taken out.

KK: Goodness me.

AM: Uh huh.

KK: Uh, I didn't know that.

AM: Um hmmm and those other people in those cottages had to pay there too.

KK: Yes, well of course when we lived on Voorhis Campus we had to pay.

AM: Yea, uh huh.

KK: But it wasn't as nearly the comparative cost that you paid for \$125.00.

AM: It went down a little after a few years because I don't know how they, how they did it, was the fact that the age of the house you know, and something like that. But anyway, that was it.

KK: About how many years did he work that way where he was both head, or chief of Adera and President of Cal Poly?

AM: Well, I could look at it in there where we saw the appointment of Wes Smith. I remember he brought Wes Smith's teaching over here at the high school, Ag teachers.

KK: At San Luis Obispo High [School]? His parents lived at Pismo Beach, didn't they?

AM: His parents are still there, I think. He brought Wes in as sort of an assistant to him. [unintelligible]

KK: And then President McPhee came down here to be president of Cal Poly?

AM: Yes.

KK: OK.

AM: Yes, Wes. No, he didn't get Wes until he was down here for a while to help him on it.

KK: Oh, I see.

AM: You know, a lot of assignments to do and so forth.

KK: Yea.

AM: But ah I can't remember the years that he you know, doing it alone but I could look on there and see the—

KK: We've just taken a little time here to look up the exact year and Mrs. McPhee has found that President McPhee took over as full-time president and resigned his job as chief of the Bureau of Agricultural Education at Sacramento on July 9, 1948. That means Mrs. McPhee that there was a span of fifteen years there where he.

AM: Where he was doing both jobs.

KK: Where he was doing both jobs for the state as a trained salary.

AM: Uh huh, yea.

KK: That was a wonderful contribution in itself.

AM: Yes, I know it was.

KK: Alright now, he came down here as the full-time president when you were already living together.

AM: We came here in [19]'33 in July of '33

KK: And lived on campus?

AM: And lived on campus. Right down here in Sacramento.

KK: Okay, now—

AM: We had been in Sacramento eight years.

KK: Now, 1948 means that in the interim there he had also added San Dimas, the Voorhis School for Boys.

AM: Yes, because that was in '38.

KK: Yea, so there he added another job. He was doing three jobs really for the state there for the same salary.

AM: Exactly. I tell you I just often wondered how he ever could keep it up. He just went, went, went. Well, you know, he went down to his office at six in the morning and worked all day long until six o'clock at night. He'd come home at noon time and sometimes rest a little bit after he'd eat lunch, I'd have it ready for him and he'd eat lunch and then rest for maybe a half an hour and go back again, that was the way [laughter].

[laughter]

AM: I always think of what her name was. She was a little bit of a girl and Alice Daniels—you know his secretary he had for so many years, had been with him in Sacramento in fact 17 years—she decided to go into the farming in World War II you know.

KK: Became a WAC [Women's Army Corps].

AM: Became a WAC yea. Did you know Alice Daniels?

KK: I met her, yea.

AM: And uh, anyway, oh Clark is her name is the young girl he'd gotten from Los Angeles out of the Education Office there in Los Angeles. He asked if she'd be interested in coming up as his secretary, and she did. She just couldn't understand how'd you have to work overtime, she thought there was something wrong, something's wrong with the system anybody that couldn't get everything in between eight and five.

KK: Yea.

AM: That's what she was accustomed to [laughter]

KK: A lot of people feel and that's also that unless you had your desk clear at the end of the day, why there was something wrong too.

AM: Yea, [laughter] Well anyway, and I said I sometimes think so too.

[laughter]

KK: I'll bet she did.

AM: He always managed someway that I could come along with him and I was very fortunate when Judy was an infant or when she was born. I kept her birth sign woman. I'd had others off and on, you know, that really didn't amount to much. I'd get nervous sometimes about leaving the youngsters. So then when Helen and Bernadette got to be fourteen and fifteen, they got a special license from the motor vehicle department, they could drive to school because you know, there were no busses or anything.

KK: That's right.

AM: And high school was quite a distance. So, they gave them a special permit that they could drive back and forth to school and if absolutely necessary, to the market if Mrs. Crilly (which was her name) needed anything. Of course, then you could telephone and have your groceries delivered you know. Somebody came and delivered them to me out there. So, it worked out very nicely that way. One disadvantage, she didn't drive, so we did get the children, Helen and Bernadette, they were fourteen and fifteen, a special permit, and so, they were able to drive. Jul got them a Ford.

KK: Was that a Model A?

AM: I suppose it would have been.

KK: I suspect it would have been.

AM: That long ago, see they're both in their fifties.

[laughter]

AM: We just missed one year of our fiftieth wedding anniversary.

KK: [unintelligible]

AM: Jul was so sick until November. Just about four days before he passed away, he said to me one morning, do you remember what day this is, and I said yes but I didn't think you remembered, and he said I did.

[laughter]

KK: Bless his heart.

AM: That was our forty-ninth wedding anniversary.

KK: That meant a lot didn't it?

AM: Yes. His brain was just as keen as ever.

KK: Alright, now we're in 1948 and you have your family built by that time, do you?

AM: [laughter] I have to think of how old Judy is. She was thirty-seven so, yea.

KK: So, you built your family then. Ok, now right along about there, came the Kellogg Campus didn't it?

AM: Yea. Wasn't that about [19]'50—

KK: The issue of the Kellogg Campus was really about [19]'48 as I recall.

AM: The beginning of it, yea.

KK: The beginning of when they really got in gear on it.

AM: On it, yes.

KK: Then of course the operated of the Kellogg Campus and the Voorhis Campus together and I believe it was 1956 when they actually had the big move from Voorhis over to—

AM: Voorhis over, uh huh. Was it '56?

KK: I believe it was. The Science Building was finished in 1954 but it was right in that era there.

AM: In there, uh huh, I remembered for a while that they commuted the boys back and forth remember?

KK: That' right, and they brought over hot lunches to serve in the Arabian Horse Arena.

AM: Yes, uh huh.

KK: There at noon.

AM: I remember that [laughter].

[laughter]

AM: All the different things.

KK: Yea. I've heard some people say, that Julian McPhee was a man who watched his expenses every day of the year and that often times he would make a point to keep in touch, just drop by and say hello to the secretaries of the legislatures [unintelligible].

AM: I'd go up there with him, he knew everybody. All along the corridors you know, I knew everybody, all of the different people in there.

KK: They said that he was a consummate lobbyist in the best sense of the word. He really knew how to talk the language of a politician.

AM: He seemed to, yes. Do you remember when Patterson was here, Assemblyman Patterson?

KK: No, I don't remember that no.

AM: You probably didn't, no, that was long before we came down here. Then he was allowed on the floor, to sit in on the floor and of course then they made that in later years that rule that nobody was allowed in on the floor. Sometimes I get real peeved when I see how they got by with their big raise up there. You know, if you ever spent very much time around there, you just feel how much time you waste, you know.

KK: Yea.

AM: Because most of them are men that have other interests too very many of them are attorneys and—

KK: Real estate people.

AM: Real estate people and so forth.

KK: A number of farmers of course.

AM: And when I think of the time Chris Jespersen was there and the little [unintelligible] and the work that he did now he was a wonderful man and just worked so hard; interested in the downtrodden and the poorer people you know. For them to make a living and things like that. Chris was really a wonderful fellow.

KK: Alright now. Let me say this, let me ask you this as the wife of President McPhee. What did you consider his outstanding qualities as an educator?

AM: Well, uh, I felt that his interests in the young people. That he really enjoyed teaching when he taught in Gilroy. I think he just really and truly enjoyed that; he would often say that. That he really and truly enjoyed that and missed it. When he went into his other state work.

KK: Yea, the administrative side of it.

AM: The administrative side of it, yea. Yea, he would very often say that, to me that he had missed it a great deal.

KK: Alright now that was as a teacher, an educator. Now what would you consider his strong points as an administrator?

[pause]

AM: Well, I thought he was very forceful in his way of doing things and to me it just seemed to come to him naturally to be able to lead people. Now that would be my answer to that.

KK: Alright, in other words, it sounds like his leadership, and an aggressive approach to problems.

AM: Aggressive approach to problems, right, I think so.

KK: Now you and I have mentioned this before, but I'd like to get your comments here. A lot of people—by a lot, I shouldn't say a lot—but I've heard several people who knew him say, that they felt that could never have withstood the change in the young people and the change in educational methodologies and so on, that we are experiencing today. They felt that he would have been completely or would have been out of place because he would have inflected so many of his beliefs and policies and procedures. Now what would be your response to that, were they right?

AM: I think their right, yes. I've thought of it very often. I've wondered, and I've said to myself I don't think he would ever be able to change that much in his ways and thoughts to ever consent to many things that I know of. I could think of one little incident that I'm thinking of you know I'm sure you remember too how he objected to these fraternities.

KK: Yes.

AM: Strongly objected you know.

KK: Social fraternities.

AM: The social fraternities yes. For a while, after Julian had passed away and I was just trying everything to keep myself occupied, why they have a committee or a group that go into the hospital out at Poly, at the clinic, the women, of that women's club out there and help, oh you know, go around and bring candy.

KK: So, the Gray Ladies?

AM: Gray Lady type of thing. One time when I went in, you have to introduce yourself, and I said I was Mrs. McPhee, that my name was Mrs. McPhee [unintelligible]. The second day I came in [unintelligible] a little while, and he said, "do you mind if I ask you a question?" And I said, "no." He said, "why did your husband object to these fraternities so?" He was one of the boys that had been here you see when Jul was still here. He said, "no matter how often he approached me," he said, "you couldn't stir him one bit on changing his mind." I said, "No, he was always that way." I said, "I think maybe some experience, past experiences that he had had, and I know that."

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KK: This is a continuation of our visit with Mrs. McPhee on the evening of July 12th. It's a continuation of the two cassettes we have already done on her recollections on President McPhee. It's a very precious evening and I'm going to ask Mrs. McPhee to continue with answering some of the questions and calling up some of the recollections that are so important to the history of the institution. Mrs. McPhee, we were just dealing with what as we concluded the previous one?

AM: What was it we were um, discussing what was it now, his, oh, whether you felt that he would have been able to—

KK: To withstand changes, that's right.

AM: To change his ways with all the new ways and I felt that he wouldn't, I felt that he would still.

KK: You were using the social fraternities as an example.

AM: And the social fraternity as an example; he never would consent to them. This young boy inquired of me why, and so I had to tell him about, I don't know but just what I've observed in the paper, the *San Luis Obispo Telegram Tribune* at different times, that the police have had to go to some of these fraternities and close them because of the complaints of the neighbors. There was one over here on Phillip Lane and they'd have them on Friday afternoons, and they put the wording on the boards and all around to come, everybody come to T.I.G.F. "Thank God It's Friday."

[laughter]

AM: The initials. So, the city council has been having it on their discussion for a few months now.

KK: In other words, they had the street celebrations there.

AM: In and out. I heard one person, a friend of mine tell me that lives on this Philip Lane where this one incident happened, that they had to call the police because of the things that were going on. They couldn't hardly get into their driveways. The cars and one person said, I don't know how true this is, there were probably 500 young people, boys and girls attending this so which you can imagine in a small neighborhood there up on Phillips Lane. It's just a one- or two-lane street or something like that. A two-block street I should say. Those are some of the things that I have thought of that he may have said, "Well, I never would have given into them because I knew and had heard from other presidents of different colleges."

KK: That he just simply wasn't going through the same thing when he knew the answer already.

AM: All the time. He felt that things like that might happen.

KK: Alright, let me ask you this, another legend of Cal Poly as I think you well know, is that President McPhee declined to have co-eds at the college until all of his daughters were married off [laughter].

AM: Some little [laughter] saying of his I think just to get a laugh or two. It so happened that just at that time I think the last of them were married.

KK: That's right, it really worked out.

AM: It was quite a coincidence; [laughter] and we'd laugh about it.

KK: How did you used to handle the dating problems with your daughters there right on campus?

AM: Well, one or two incidences I can remember. Helen was 17 and was in high school, and the man she married this—was Emile LaSalle—was at Poly and there was a dance. Emile was in dairying, yes, I know it was. They were holding them out at Morro Bay—I guess a dinner and a dance for the dairy club, and Emile I guess had invited Helen to go and this other friend of her's whose dad was an accountant in the office there, Esther Bowman, was also a friend of another boy who worked with Emile; Charlie. I can't remember the last name, and she had been invited to go so, Emile thought it would be lovely if the four of them could go together. So, Helen came to her dad and asked if she might go, and dad said, "Oh, that's fine," he said, "We're going, we've been invited to that and so we'll take you with us." So, Helen said nothing. We heard all of this later, that the boys were quite disturbed. So, we took the four of them to the party and brought them home.

[laughter]

AM: So that was one little incident. Well, and as I said, the older ones always said we were so much more lenient with Judy and Carol.

[laughter]

KK: Course we face the same thing in our family.

AM: I think the older ones always think that.

KK: The three older ones were convinced that the two younger ones got off easy.

AM: Yea. I think that's exactly what they think. I think its characteristic of family. So, that was about it. Of course, Bernadette married down in Georgia, I went down with her. Her husband was in the Army down there.

KK: Fort Benning was it, or?

AM: Yes, and she was about in her last quarter at the University of California. And, uh, so she came over, we were up in San Francisco, and we were visiting at Julian's home there, and, uh, she came across the Bay to tell us—ask us I should say—and ask if she could be married because Herb was getting worried that he was probably going overseas. And I objected, “No,” and said, “When you went to college, you're to stay through and finish.” “Well, I'll finish.” So then, they could get lots more from their dad than I would ever give into you know.

KK: They could huh? [laughter].

AM: Oh yea. As long as they could.

KK: A lot of people won't believe you but ah [laughter].

AM: As long as they could sit down and reason with him you know.

KK: Yea.

AM: And he had all sorts of faith in them you see. He'd always say to me when they were 14 or 15, he said “Now they know the difference between right and wrong,” and, “We had taught them, and they know what it is and that is it.” So anyway, we talked it over and Bernadette convinced him that as soon as Herb went overseas, she would come back, and finish her work at college. That was it. So, she said, “Herb can't get time off; we've got to go to Georgia.” So, she and I went to Georgia. [laughter]

KK: Did you fly?

AM: Fly nothing; we went by train [laughter].

KK: You did.

AM: You know, it was war time.

KK: Yes.

AM: I tell you, some of those, going through, we had a change at Atlanta.

KK: Um Hmmm.

AM: We had to get the train down in Georgia.

KK: You would, yea.

AM: And they were just using every old train available, like the vintage of it. The fact that in the car, no pullman on it. They had one of these little old round-belly stoves for heating the ah, it was in February, ah, heating the car, and had to sit up all night. I still remember the ride I can assure you.

[laughter]

AM: There were very few planes, passenger planes flying at that time.

KK: During war time, that was true.

AM: It will be 30 years, in [19]'73.

KK: Um Hmm, yep.

AM: Yea, and uh. So, Bernadette was married down there. Then Herb didn't go for a whole year, but she did come back and finished her work at the university. Nine units is what she had.

KK: [laughter].

AM: So, she came back and finished her work over there.

KK: Now, could you give us the location of your daughters now?

AM: Where they are?

KK: Yes.

AM: Well, Helen who is the oldest is over in Atascadero; lives in Atascadero.

KK: Her name is.

AM: Helen LaSalle.

KK: Helen LaSalle.

AM: Uh huh.

KK: And her husband?

AM: Emile LaSalle and he is a regional—he's part of the Bureau of Ag Education as a regional supervisor.

KK: Regional supervisor.

AM: His territory is—

KK: They used to be over at Hanford, didn't they?

AM: Formally they'd been at—

KK: Where he was an Ag teacher.

AM: —They'd formally been at Hanford where he was an Ag teacher over there.

KK: He made an outstanding record as an Ag teacher over there.

AM: Yes, a very fine teacher Ag teacher and I guess he was a very fine supervisor. Then Bernadette lives in Willow[s] her name is Brownlee, Herbert Brownlee.

KK: They were the ones who lived at Atascadero?

AM: No, they lived in Arroyo Grande.

KK: I mean, oh pardon me, yes Arroyo Grande, I know that so well.

AM: Arroyo Grande. They've been there for twenty years.

KK: Herb was an Ag teacher.

AM: Ag teacher there. Then two years ago, he went up to Willow[s] where they are now in Willow[s]. It's two years now. Jean Beck. Kenneth Beck is her husband. She lives out in the Carrizo Plains and her husband owns this wheat ranch out there.

KK: As I recall, Jean's a registered nurse, is she not?

AM: Yes.

KK: She's sort of a medical frontier or host out there isn't she?

AM: Yes, uh huh, yea Jean is a registered nurse. Of course, Helen graduated from the University of California, also. We had the three of them up there at one time.

KK: At one time?

AM: Yea, Bernadette and Jean.

KK: What was Helen's major?

AM: Child Psychology.

KK: Child Psychology? Alright now that's three of them.

AM: And then Claire.

KK: Claire.

AM: Married this young fellow that she met that was a Navy cadet out here and he was a flyer in the Navy. He had been a pre-med student and after he got out of the war when the war was, the second world war was over, he went back to his medical work and they were married then. And her name was Lavelle, and he is an obstetrician in San Francisco. That is where his office is. His home now is in Hillsborough. And then Claire of course was very seriously ill and passed away when she was 33 years of age. Left six children.

KK: Six children?

AM: Four boys and two girls. They're now grown up most of them, three of them have finished college. One is still in college and the other two are high school and grammar school. Their father, the doctor, had remarried really a very fine person. She's been very lovely to them and they have been very fond of her and so it seems to have worked out very nicely for her and all of them. Carol lives in San Luis Obispo and she's Mrs. Norton and her husband is a pharmacist; owns the Norton Pharmacy here. Jule Ann lives in—

KK: Let's see, Carol has how many children?

AM: Three children, three.

KK: Three children.

AM: Three and—

KK: Boys or girls?

AM: Carol has three girls.

KK: Three girls?

AM: Uh huh. The rest, Helen had four boys, and two girls. And Bernadette has—let's see—she has three boys and the four girls. And then Jean has three boys and two girls. Jean has the five, she lives out in the Carrizo Plains and her husband has a big wheat ranch out there. I think they have like ten thousand acres out there.

KK: Dry land farming?

AM: Yes. Then of course Carol was here in San Luis Obispo which makes it very nice for me to have somebody [laughter] so near.

KK: Alright now.

AM: So then, Jule Ann lives in Sebastopol.

KK: Now we never called her Jule Ann. We used to call her what, Judy?

AM: We used to call her Judy, but her name is Jule Ann.

KK: Jule Ann, ok.

AM: And uh her husband never calls her anything but Julie because when he knew her here, when he saw her name, and he met her, he called her Julie for her name. So, the rest of the family, our family course, all call her Judy. She has three boys and two girls. The oldest is sixteen and the baby will be three this year. So that is.

[laughter]

AM: That is the group of them.

KK: How many grandchildren do you have?

AM: 32.

KK: 32?

AM: 32.

KK: I think you mentioned that you also had some great-grandchildren?

AM: Three great-grandsons.

KK: Three great-grandsons?

AM: Yea.

KK: How did President McPhee take all of these children?

AM: Oh, he loved them.

KK: He loved them huh?

AM: That's why he bought this house on top of the hill, this great big house, that nine-roomed house you know.

KK: [laughter] Yea we saw the ranch.

AM: And the garden, all the garden around it, and—

KK: He bought it so they'd have a place for the grandson.

AM: So that they'd have a place to come whenever they wanted to, and that on Sundays he could have barbeques for them. The men at the cafeteria, Jack and all those fellows had given him a beautiful barbeque there you know. A great big thing. So anyway, those were all his plans you know for them, but things didn't materialize in that way.

KK: He was really head of a wonderful clan there, wasn't he?

AM: Yes, uh huh.

KK: I don't think he was worried much about this movement of population control, was he?

AM: No, I don't think so either. No [laughter].

KK: You know, I'm going to ask you something here now just to close it off and, maybe you can tell me, I hope you can. If you thought that he had one message, that he wanted to leave to young people, what would it be?

AM: Well, I think he always felt that a young fellow I heard him say it, should never be ashamed of the fact of working with their hands. Using their hands.

KK: The dignity of work?

AM: The dignity of work. That he felt was very important.

KK: We appreciate your giving of this for the archives of the school and I think you know, how much a part you hold [unintelligible]?

AM: Well, I always hope so and you know, always hoped it never dies down.

KK: You know it won't.

AM: I hope not. Because he really worked real hard to get it established. He always sort of had this dream. You know, he was a great one for uh for dreaming things like that. He had pictured things that he would like, the way they might go and then he would start out to try to accomplish that.

KK: You know, there's one thing that, pardon me, go right ahead.

AM: And I think that he did, really accomplish what he started out to do.

KK: I think he did, if for no other reason, not long ago, I saw an article about Cal Tech, which there's no more purer educational level where this article says that Cal Tech was beginning to realize the importance of emphasizing the doing of things and the teaching of things and that essentially was what President McPhee always used to tell us.

AM: Yes, I think he wanted the boys' home, when they first came out here to school, to learn, to do these things with their hands and then, of course isn't that where they got the name upside-down education? So often people would laugh about, things like how they were going to pan out.

[laughter]

KK: But it did pan out.

AM: It did pan out, yes.

KK: Now it's coming in to its own.

AM: Yes, exactly, uh huh. I saw, what was it, *Los Angeles Times*, one paper where this man from Washington was here. I don't recall his name, the vocational man from the Office of Education of Washington D.C. out giving big, long speeches and so forth on getting back to this type of work.

KK: The operation of the fundamentals.

AM: And the operations, um hum, exactly.

KK: Well, thank you again.

AM: Well, you're quite welcome, I just hope I was able to.

KK: It's exactly what I'm sure we wanted.

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